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Glen A. Pierce

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evangelical

# VISITOR

October 25, 1982

What's in a name?

"Good health"  
procedures





**I propose that the name "Brethren in Christ" is our family "last name."  
And I also suggest some principles we might consider in naming a new congregation.**

In 1968 Norman Bert wrote the Heritage Series book entitled, *Adventure in Discipleship*. The thirteenth chapter was about "The Meaning of a Name." Norman pointed out some of the names that were used to identify the group which is now known as the Brethren in Christ. We were first called "River Brethren," likely due to most of the families residing near the Susquehanna River in Pennsylvania about 1778. To distinguish us from other groups, we were also named "New Brethren" or "River Mennonites." Still other names used were probably due to certain practices of the group, like "Plain People," "Bush-Meeting Dutch," or "Tunkers." The Canadians used the latter name for a number of years. In 1904 the legal name "Brethren in Christ" came into accepted use, and in the 20th century we have carried that name around the world.

There is indeed meaning in a name. It can have meaning by those who first give the name or by those who pour meaning into a name that they have received. Some of us were born into homes that simply communicated that our church had a good name. Others of us accepted the name when we agreed to become a part of the Brethren in Christ family.

It is noteworthy that our name is not derived from a man or founder, nor is it descriptive of any one doctrinal viewpoint, nor a geographical place. Rather, the name describes a group of people. As Norman Bert outlined it, the meaning has to do with our roots in the brotherhood concepts of both Anabaptism and Pietism. We are both a church family and a people of the warmed heart. The gathered group is a priority, unity is a passion, and we have always been going through change. We tend to borrow and combine from other groups.

Across the more recent years, the name has been constant but the experience of people has differed. Therefore the feelings about a church name really vary. If we had good and warm experiences as a child and youth, then we tend to feel comfortable with the name, just like our family's last name. On the other hand, if we had negative and embarrassing experiences, we may feel ashamed of the name Brethren in Christ.

A number of factors are involved when names are given. There are individuals who believe that they alone know the best possible name, while others believe that only a larger group of persons should take such responsibility. For example, in naming a child there are those who think the father should take that responsibility. (I observe that usually fathers have that opinion.) Other people feel the mother or relatives should be consulted in naming the child. (Yes, the mother and her family feel best about that idea.) There usually isn't much said about our last name but rather the unique descriptive person's first and middle names.

Another factor is the source for selecting names. We may look through the Bible, other books, in the family, in the neighborhood, etc. One of my seminary professors said he and his wife found a name for their daughter in the obituary column of the daily newspaper. Names are often connected to feelings, sentiment, and hunches. There are a few who look up root meanings in a dictionary. Association with names of special people and former friends is often a factor. (I discovered my wife wasn't excited about using a name for our daughter of one of the girls I dated prior to our marriage.) Some like traditional and familiar names, and others want to change and be creative.

Choosing a church name has even more dynamics than naming a child. I would propose that the name Brethren in Christ is our family last name. And I also suggest some principles that we

might consider in the naming of a new church or a change in name for an existing congregation.

1. We should consider the history of our movement.
2. We should deal with the matter of identity and what a name may convey to others.
3. There is wisdom in hearing each person as well as involving a group of people, and keeping those two in balance.
4. Broad counsel would enrich the selection of a name that is to be descriptive of a certain group.
5. Remember that people pour meaning into a name more than a name gives value to people. And closely related is the fact that people reach people, names do not reach people.
6. The purpose of a name is a significant factor in selection.
7. The loyalty to a brotherhood concept is part of the heritage of the Brethren in Christ.

As readers reflect on these seven principles, there will likely be different interpretations. I will make a few observations of my own. Choosing a name is important, but what is behind the name is even more important. We should be aware of the actual perception of others, as well as what we suppose they perceive. It would also be valid to test a name (or names) with other congregations and with those who are aware of other names. This could help to avoid confusing duplication and misunderstandings. For example, if a small group named themselves The People's Church in a small community in the East and then told someone in San Francisco that they were a member of such a group, they would be associated with Jimmy Jones. In Toronto, however, it might be a positive factor.

With the planting of new churches, we are also faced with the need to sometimes name a new church before the actual group of believers have formally

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*Don Shafer is bishop of the Midwest and Pacific Regional Conferences, and is General Secretary-elect for the denomination.*



# in a name?

by R. Donald Shafer

organized. This may be a good time to be tentative and allow the forming group to be a part of deciding the local name. If we are Brethren in Christ, we should communicate that without fanfare or shyness. It is not being honest to convey that we are an independent community group when, in fact, we are a family of associated churches. True, we may have some strange relatives, but then every family has a few of those.

Having said these things, I want to make some statements about brotherhood. I believe the name "Brethren in Christ" is a good name. I think it should be a part of every local church name. If we are not happy with the name, then we should together process a change. It wouldn't be the first time in our history. But it would be a complicated and legal hassle, not to mention family feelings getting involved.

But as for me, I like the name. I perceive the Brethren in Christ as a loving, caring, serving group of brothers and sisters. (By the way, if you struggle with the word "brethren" as being sexist, I suggest Vernard Eller's little book, *The Language of Canaan and The Grammar of Feminism*.) Until my brothers and sisters call for a name change, I would affirm our family name. I would spend my time and energy pouring meaning and respect into a heritage that is already godly and mostly good. I believe I can be more effective and efficient by living up to a good name rather than creating a new one. Of course, as for the "first names" for congregations, that is another matter.

These are the opinions of one brother, who had the privilege of being surrounded by those who gave a positive meaning to the appellation "Brethren in Christ." Dialogue on the meaning of our name is welcomed, and would be very much in keeping with the nature of our family life together. ■

# evangelical VISITOR

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# **“Good health” procedures**

**There are certain courses of action we must follow  
to maintain good health in the church, the body of Christ.**

by Calvin C. Hamblin, Jr.

Just as there are certain things we must do to maintain good physical health, there are certain courses of action we must follow in order to maintain good health in the church, the body of Christ. Paul mentions several of these “good health” procedures as he said a final farewell to the elders of the Ephesian church (recorded in Acts 20:17-38).

First, Paul declares the need for faithfulness in proclaiming the whole counsel of God: “You know that I have not hesitated to preach anything that would be helpful to you.” May it also be said of the Brethren in Christ, that we told all God’s will and that we were not hindered in declaring the whole truth. May we as a collective body speak fearlessly and forthrightly to a world that would silence all prophetic voices. In a world where it is increasingly difficult to distinguish one religious voice from another, let us as Brethren in Christ not add to the difficulty by pandering to the fears nor to the favor of men. Instead, may we tell to all as it is.

Secondly, Paul had lived independently with a pioneering spirit in order that he might build the brotherhood. He had worked with his own hands to supply his needs and to help others who were in need. Not that he was living in defiant independence of the brotherhood. Paul simply did not expect the brotherhood to do for him what he was quite capable of doing for himself. He was determined to make a contribution to the church. He wanted to be an asset, not a liability. This must be our attitude, in our congregations and in our regional conferences as well, if we are to enjoy good health. We must first stand on our own two feet if we’re going to make a contribution to the whole.

Thirdly, Paul demonstrated how we need to face the future—with great bravery. He saw that troublesome times lay ahead for him and for the Ephesian church. Yet, his vision of the end did not deter him from his work. Rather, it intensified his efforts. How many of us in the church are tempted to throw up our hands in frustration when we envision the potential terrible economic and socio-political upheavals on the horizon. But if ever there was a day to bravely risk it all for Jesus, this is that day of opportunity for the church. It’s the challenge of risking all for Jesus that will get the “health-producing juices” flowing once again in the body that has tended to become comfortable, satisfied, fat, and sluggish.

Then, Paul reminds us of the necessity of duty with such words as guard, feed, shepherd, work! There seems to be increasing scientific evidence supporting a correlation between people’s physical and mental well-being and their ability to find purpose and meaning in life. The church has known this all along. The church has always recognized that knowing and performing duty—finding and fulfilling her purpose—is *the* way to good health. By being obedient to the Lord in the performance of duty, we find and maintain good health.

**Risking all for  
Jesus will get the  
“health-producing  
juices” flowing  
once again!**

Finally, Paul reminds the Ephesian elders of the dangers that are always lurking near at hand. Where there is truth and the proclamation of truth, falsehood is never far away. I am not very old, yet I have lived long enough to observe that religious hucksters abound and their numbers are increasing. They profiteer and live luxuriously by a distortion of some aspect of biblical truth. How many good but unwary Brethren in Christ have helped to further the financial crusades of those who proclaim teachings contrary to our own. We have often been impressed with the magnificence and surpassing glories of other ministries. We have admired the bigness, the multiplicity of programs, and the huge financial outlay. We must, however, guard against the old temptation Israel succumbed to in desiring a king so that they might be like all the other nations round about.

May God open our eyes to the adequacy of the simple truths proclaimed in our own churches. It is not the “Gospel of Jesus and Health” we need. It is not the “Gospel of Jesus and Wealth” that we proclaim. For over two centuries our church has proclaimed that the Savior himself is more than adequate. Christ is, in fact, “all-sufficient” to any and all who have leaned upon him. May we never stray from this position! We need to hear what Paul says: “Be on your guard!” Vigilance is not only the price of freedom; it’s also the price of good health.

An interpretive paraphrase of Paul’s benediction would be relevant to the church which is seeking to be the healthy organism God designed her to be: “Now I commit you to God and to the Word of his grace, which can build you up unto a measure of good health, and give you an inheritance among all those who, like yourself, are set apart for God’s purposes.” ■

*The author pastors the Valley View  
Brethren in Christ Church in Roanoke, Va.*



# Discussing Peace and Justice

by Dave Brubaker and K. B. Hoover

We have been honored to serve the church over the past year as a "Peace and Justice Education Resource Team." Since our efforts have been supported by many persons and agencies in the church, we felt it appropriate to report to the entire church on our activities. Although our joint assignment was completed at the end of August, 1982, we believe there is a renewed interest regarding the relationship of our faith to peace and justice concerns in the church.

Our assignment was one of the many positive results of the "Consultation on Peace and Justice Education," held at Grantham (PA) in December of 1980. Fifty-eight men and women from across the brotherhood came together to discuss the implications for the church of the biblical themes of peace and justice, and to consider a proposed educational program. A five-member task force was formed to develop the details of the educational effort. One of their suggestions was that a voluntary service team be appointed to help stimulate the church in its study of these questions.

The Commission on Peace and Social Concerns, working in consultation with the Board of Christian Education, contacted us in March, 1981, requesting that we serve as this team. We accepted the one-year assignment (September, 1981 to August, 1982), and began to discuss and pray about the direction we should go. In May of 1981 we had a very productive meeting with the bishops, receiving counsel and support that was to continue throughout our assignment. We continued to meet together during the summer of 1981, and by the fall we were prepared to actively begin our assignment.

The nature of our activities in the past year could be generally classified in seven areas. These are highlighted below with a brief explanatory note.

## 1) Making Personal Contacts in Churches

A major part of our focus was on  
October 25, 1982

bringing a personal witness for biblical peace and justice into Brethren in Christ congregations. A letter announcing our availability (with an accompanying cover letter from the respective bishops) went out to all pastors in October of 1981. We received a good response to that letter, resulting in contacts in over 20 churches and another eight youth groups during the following year. Additional invitations came for such events as pastors meetings, college classes, New Call to Peacemaking, and a holiness camp meeting. The full list of our contacts accompanies this article.

In our contacts with churches we concentrated on the *biblical base* for peace and justice and its *historical development* in the Christian church. Question and answer sessions with a congregation usually followed our presentations, during which particular issues were often raised. We were continually amazed at the good spirit and openness of the brothers and sisters with whom we shared, and believe that the Holy Spirit "prepared the way" for us in our contacts.

## 2) Making Available Resource Material

Since we knew it would not be possible for us to have personal contacts in every church in the brotherhood, we decided early to provide relevant resource material to interested persons and congregations. We compiled a 20-page "Peace and Justice Education Resource Manual" and distributed two copies to every Brethren in Christ congregation. The manual lists dozens of books, pamphlets, audio-visual and other resource material with a Christian perspective on peace and justice.

Requests continue to come in from families and congregations for the materials offered. Nearly \$500 worth of books alone have been sold through our office. These materials have served to challenge hundreds of persons whom

we've not been able to personally contact.

## 3) Promoting the Availability of Other Resource People

Aware that there were many other persons throughout the denomination who were committed to a biblical understanding of peace and justice, we compiled a "speakers' list" of persons in each regional conference who were qualified to serve as a resource to churches in these areas. By promoting their availability through the resource manual and special mailings, we received requests for their services. Four speakers from Messiah College (Owen Alderfer, E. Morris Sider, Luke Keefer, Jr. and Martin Schrag) received ten invitations among them to area churches.

We also worked to facilitate the contacts of other resource people as they were available to the church. For example, we scheduled three congregational contacts for Harry Nigh (of "Man to Man, Woman to Woman" in Toronto) regarding ministry to offenders during a weekend in May. At the same time, we regret that we were unable to schedule workshops to help develop other resource people across the church. This is a job that remains to be done.

## 4) Developing the "Peace and Justice Newsletter"

Under the capable editorship of Harriet Bicksler, the two-year old "Peace and Justice Newsletter" has emerged as the primary forum for examining peace and justice issues in the Brethren in Christ Church. We gave special attention to developing a new format and expanding the circulation of the new newsletter. In just about a year's time the newsletter's circulation has doubled to nearly 600 persons.

## 5) Presence at Church Conferences

The Commission on Peace and Social Concerns requested that we make a special effort to have a presence at the 1982 regional conferences and at General Conference. Representatives of the Commission presented display tables at each conference this past spring, making valuable contacts in explaining the educational program. At General Conference a workshop (conducted by Mary Fisher and K. B. Hoover) was offered which challenged persons to become involved in particular peace and justice ministries.

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## Discussing Peace and Justice . . .

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### 6) Staff Support to the COPSC

Because of his Voluntary Service position in the missions office, Dave Brubaker was able to contribute part-time staff support to the Commission on Peace and Social Concerns during the past year. Aside from handling the team's correspondence with the church, Dave coordinated certain commission projects—such as the recent food aid drive for New York City.

### 7) Draft Counseling Work

A recent major effort has been our work to assemble a "Draft Counseling Network" in the Brethren in Christ Church. Such a network is seen as essential not only if and when a military draft is reinstated, but also to counsel persons who even now are making decisions about military service. All U. S. pastors were asked to designate a person in their congregations who could serve in this capacity, and a regional "Draft Counselor Coordinator" was appointed for each regional conference.

The initial shipment of materials has gone out to all of the counselors, who will now have some time to prepare themselves to responsibly counsel young persons. Interestingly, the federal government has worked very hard in the last year to complete its apparatus for conducting a military draft. Local draft boards have been selected and trained, and the Selective Service is ready to go

as soon as Congress gives the word. Shouldn't we also be ready?

Such have been our activities during the past year. As we reflect on this experience of serving the church in this unique way, we would offer a few brief thoughts:

There is considerable variety across the brotherhood (and within single congregations) regarding the interpretation of "biblical peace and justice" for our time. We do not deplore the variety, but we would observe that no one need worry about a monolithic position on such matters within the Brethren in Christ church.

There is a great need to break through our sensitivities on such issues and begin to talk with each other about them. If the church isn't the place to talk about major moral questions such as abortion or nuclear weapons, then what is the place? We must remember that if we receive no input from the church on these issues, we will only have input from a secular society.

Many of our young people are uninformed about the church's stance regarding peace, but are eager to learn more about the matter. In some churches we contacted it was obvious that the young people had been wrestling with issues such as military service, while in others it seemed probable that such a question had never been raised. Young people are also confused by the contradictory stance which some of their parents have taken—affirming "non-resistance" on the one hand while advocating a U.S. military buildup on the other. Most see the failures of the world's way of solving

problems with violence, and want to hear what the Bible and the church have to say.

Happily, we sense a growing desire to honestly examine what the Bible has to say regarding peace and justice. Even as we were accepting speaking engagements from some churches there were many other congregations who were scheduling their own special services or Sunday School electives to look at these issues. We are convinced that what happens in the Christian education program of a local church is far more significant than any "one-shot" emphasis, and thus applaud these grass-roots efforts.

As we complete our assignment and move on to new responsibilities, we will continue to carry a deep burden for the church in her understanding of biblical peace and justice. As we do so, we would offer the following recommendations:

1. In the light of an encouraging response and a broad base of support throughout the church, it is recommended that peace and justice education be considered as a continuing and perhaps long-term ministry.

The emphasis and methodology may vary as need arises. It is recommended that the following should be continued:

- a. Seeking out and providing information for draft counselors.
- b. Continuing to provide a list of resource people for peace and justice education.
- c. Continue to update and distribute lists of resource materials.
- d. Seek to extend the readership of the "Peace and Justice Newsletter."

Beginning in September, Mark Heise, a freshman at Messiah College, is providing part-time voluntary assistance to the Commission on Peace and Social Concerns. Working out of the Missions Center in Mount Joy, Pa., he is scheduling speakers for peace and justice contacts among the congregations, as well as providing draft counseling information. Mark is a member of the Highland (Ohio) congregation.

2. We sense the need for more people throughout the church to be involved in the study of peace and justice issues and that they should have the opportunity to interact with others to keep a balanced perspective and to stimulate interest. We therefore recommend that a person knowledgeable in adult education be sought to work with one or more persons knowledgeable in peace and justice issues in the planning and conducting of peace and justice education seminars in selected areas of the church.

#### Contacts Made by the Peace and Justice Education Resource Team, 1981-1982

Manor (PA) Sunday evening, Grantham (PA) Christ's Crusaders, Sherkston (ONT) Youth Sunday School, Refton (PA) evening, Messiah College Gen. Ed. Class, Meeting with Virginia pastors, Valley View (VA) morning worship, Adney Gap (VA) Sunday evening, Carland-Zion (MI) morning worship, Lakeview (MI) Sunday evening, Midwest Regional Conference, Abilene (KS) Sunday evening, Holden Park (FL) Friday evening, Florida New Call to Peacemaking, Clarence Center (NY) Sunday worship, Jemison Valley (PA) Sunday evening.

Messiah College Brethren in Christ Life & Thought class, Lancaster (PA) Christ's Crusaders, Southern Ohio

Youth, Cincinnati (OH) Sunday service, Beulah Chapel (OH) Sunday evening, Pequea (PA) Sunday morning and evening, Elizabethtown (PA) Wednesday evening, Palmyra (PA) Christ's Crusaders, Lancaster (PA) mock draft board, Memorial Holiness Camp (OH), East Petersburg (PA) Mennonite youth, Waynesboro (PA) Sunday evening, Five Forks (PA) Sunday worship, Roxbury Camp (PA) youth, Carlisle (PA) youth and college/career S.S. classes.

Heise Hill (ONT) COPSC Seminar, Meadowvale (ONT), Oak Ridges (ONT), Ontario pastor's meetings, Fall's View Women's Bible Study (ONT), Rosebank (ONT), History Class at Collingwood Collegiate (ONT), Welland (ONT) men's group, Port Colborne (ONT), Riverside (ONT).



# Missions

# & Questions Answers

## **Roger, what is the Lord doing today in Brethren in Christ Missions?**

In many ways, the Lord is blessing our missions ministries overseas and in North America. In Nicaragua, for example, the church has experienced outstanding growth in the past few years. In 1981 the membership increased by 76% and the church is well on the way toward its goal of planting 20 new churches in 1982. People are finding new life in Jesus Christ and are becoming part of a church fellowship.

Our brothers and sisters in North Bihar, India, are sharing the gospel in local villages, often in the face of opposition. Earlier this year one Indian brother reported he baptized 90 believers across the border in Nepal and 40 more were waiting to be baptized.

National Christians and missionaries are involved in new church-planting ventures in places like Nagoya and Shin-Shimonoskei, Japan; the Copperbelt region of Zambia; and Caracas, Venezuela. The concern among national Christians for sharing the gospel with their neighbors is a positive sign of the Lord's working.

In North America the Lord is blessing the ministry of special missions and new church extension efforts. One example is the Bronx Community Ministries program in New York City. Here unit leaders Nathan and Cathy Bert are working with voluntary service personnel in personal discipleship and growth. The VSers in turn have found involvement in local community service and are discipling young Christians who live nearby.

## **What do you see as the number one need of the Brethren in Christ in missions today?**

Vision! If we could clearly see the tremendous opportunities before us in missions on

the one hand, and the enormous resources the Lord has put at our disposal on the other, it would release a powerful new dynamic in Brethren in Christ Missions.

## **But haven't we always been a missionary church?**

Well, not really. Historically our involvement in missions, both home and foreign, began in the last decade of the nineteenth century. And from there it grew to a peak during the decade of the 1950s. Since then there has been, until last year, a slow but substantial decline.

## **How do you account for that?**

I'm sure there are several reasons, some which we understand, others which we don't. But two factors are clear. First, the 1960s and '70s were decades of renewal of the church in North America. During this time we more vigorously pursued the enlarging of congregational ministries and the building of new facilities. Consequently, relatively more of our resources were utilized at the local level.

Second, the face of overseas missions was changing radically. The Third World was throwing off colonialist patterns and this profoundly affected both

missionaries and mission organizations. The Brethren in Christ were not immune to these changes. These factors combined to effectively reduce the level of our denominational commitment to missions.

## **You mentioned that the Brethren in Christ began their missions outreach in the last decade of the nineteenth century. What lies ahead for us in missions in the last two decades of the twentieth century?**

Only the Lord knows, of course. But I discern possibilities which are novel and exciting. For example, the population

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## **Interview with Roger Sider, Chairman of the Board for Missions**





# Missions

## Questions & Answers

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of the world is becoming progressively more urban. Missions of the future must be oriented toward the city. But we Brethren in Christ are historically a rural people. So it is no accident that our missions outreach in the past has been largely to rural areas. I think we have been a bit frightened of cities. We see them as complicated, mysterious and evil. We have not felt at home in the city. Yet that is where the people are and that is where we must go. Mission work in cities requires new models, different strategies. In missions, both home and abroad, we are entering an exciting new phase of urban ministry. It will be expensive and risky. But I believe the Lord is leading us there.

### What other developments are in store?

I believe we will be seeing the Brethren in Christ around the world increasingly take on forms and dynamics appropriate to each language and cultural group. I hope to see a French-speaking church develop in Quebec and a Spanish-speaking church in Southern California, along with the Tonga-speaking church already existent in Zambia. Of course, this too is risky. For if we allow each group freedom to develop in its own way, can we trust them and the Holy Spirit enough so that we do not needlessly impose our structures and our methods upon them?

### What issues is the board dealing with right now?

We are attempting to discern the Lord's will in long-term planning, projecting program, personnel and budget needs as far ahead as is realistic, that is six to eight years. It often takes three to four years after a new program is conceived until personnel recruitment, training and assignment on the field can be consummated. Cross-cultural work is complex and there are many uncertainties. Sudden changes in currency exchange rates, visa application proce-

dures, as well as other political and economic alterations are unpredictable.

We are attempting to find ways to save costs, to stretch the missions dollar and to make our missions work as cost effective as is humanly possible. Our Executive Secretary, Dr. Don Zook, and our Secretary of Overseas Ministries, Rev. Roy V. Sider, are especially talented in this area. In North American missions we are attempting to refine our philosophy of cross-cultural work in North America. Arlene Miller, Secretary of Home Ministries, is doing excellent work defining models for this type of work. North America is, in some ways, our most difficult mission field.

### How would you evaluate the board at the present time?

We are blessed with a board of men and women who are imbued with a spirit of service and deep commitment to missions. Dr. K.B. Hoover, who recently retired from board service after many years of exemplary leadership, and Grace Holland, a current board member who is a capable missiologist in her own right, illustrate the strength of the board. All of our board members have an excellent record of attendance at meetings. Many have special gifts and skills in the financial, administrative and leadership areas. And our members willingly give many hours of service to their duties to expedite the work of missions.

Changes are coming to the board. The structural reorganization given first approval at the 1982 General Conference calls for a reduction of board membership to 12 persons after 1984 and a division of missions responsibility between two boards—the Board for World Missions and the Board for Church Planting and Evangelism. We hope to assist in making these changes as smooth and efficient as possible.

### As the Brethren in Christ plan for the remaining years of this decade, what is the primary question we must answer regarding missions?

Will we be satisfied with the status quo or do we have faith for new growth in missions? That's an easy question to ask but extremely difficult to answer. The General Conference of both 1978 and 1980 endorsed new growth, new fields and expanded budgets. The record contributions of 1981 indicated that the brotherhood meant what it said. But during the present biennium we may see some slippage. Our budget increase for 1982 has been held to 8.8%, a rate barely

## Missions Financial Report

In Ephesians the Word of God enjoins us to work diligently with our hands so we might have to give to those in need. I am happy to be part of a missions program that includes both evangelistic zeal and a ministry to the whole person.

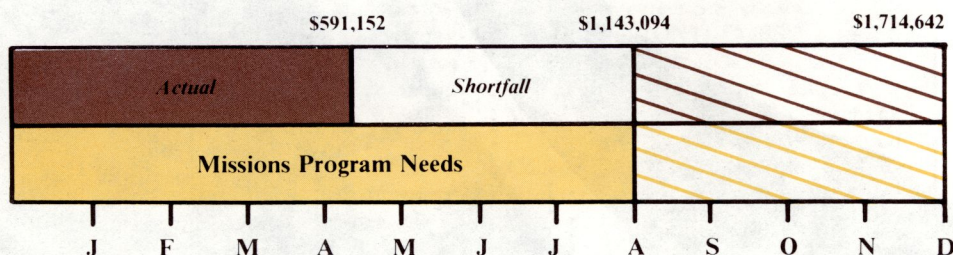
Our weekly missions need is \$2 per Brethren in Christ member. For the first eight months of 1982 the *reduced* program budget approved by General Conference totalled \$70 per member. We received just under \$36 per member.

Never before have we had to borrow so much and to pay such a large amount of interest to carry current operating programs. To continue our ministries in ten countries on five continents we need

more money during the final four months of the year than we have ever received heretofore.

We thank God for a people who have always responded when the need was clearly presented. To respond as God would have us in times like these will mean a new level of commitment and faith for some of us. But we have faith in God and in his people to believe that a generous year-end response will enable Brethren in Christ Missions to fulfill commitments made within the context of an approved budget.

—Donald R. Zook  
Executive Secretary,  
Board for Missions





equal to inflation in this country and well below that inflation rate in some of the countries in which we work. To sustain growth in missions over the next several years a more adequate annual budget increase will need to include an inflationary adjustment as well as an increment reflecting the growth of the church at home—say an additional 5%.

**But won't growing missions budgets divert funds from other worthy denominational needs?**

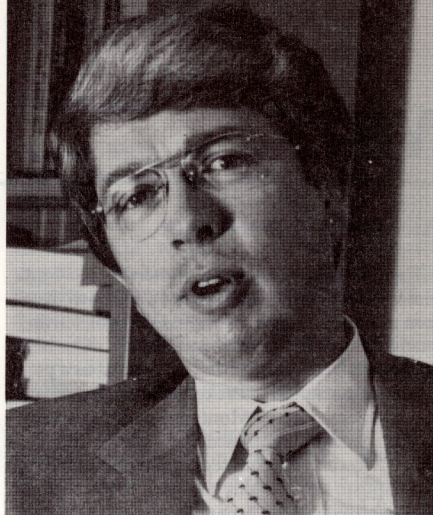
At first glance this may seem to be a danger. But I believe quite the opposite is true—that as our brotherhood becomes more deeply challenged by the opportunities we face as Brethren in Christ there will be an outpouring of funds sufficient to meet *all* brotherhood needs. The careful study of Brethren in Christ giving potential by Carl Keefer in 1979 revealed that we are substantially below a tithe in average contributions per member. Moreover, Roy Sider has calculated that a per member contribution of \$3.71 per week would fully underwrite all brotherhood agency needs for 1982. Surely this is a modest goal.

**What can we Brethren in Christ do in the next year to help missions move forward?**

We need to each find a way to become personally involved in Brethren in Christ Missions. If each of our 16,000 members felt a stake in our missions program the impact one year from now would be tremendous. There are several ways this might be done. Begin with a subscription to *therefore*, the Brethren in Christ Missions magazine. Choose one or more missionaries to specifically pray for. Select a project which you, your family or your congregation could personally underwrite (see the 1982 "Partnership Handbook" or the September/October 1982 issue of *therefore*). At the congregational level participate in planning missions programs, promotion and prayer support. Speak up at your congregational council to increase your congregation's budget commitment for missions. Best of all, consider seriously whether the Lord is calling you for full-time missions service.

**How is missions good for the church?**

This is a difficult question to answer in a few words because the benefits of missions to the brotherhood are so far-reaching. First, missions continues to supply top leadership for the church. Three current bishops—Book, Climen-



haga and Sider—all were career missionaries, as was our General Conference Secretary, Dr. Arthur Climenhaga. Many of our pastors and committed laymen have come out of missions and voluntary service experiences. So missions feeds back to the brotherhood a steady stream of women and men who are eager to serve their church and their Lord.

Second, missions harnesses the spiritual dynamic of our people individually and as congregations, and provides productive outlets for the vitality with which the Holy Spirit blesses us. Again and again I am impressed that persons and congregations who are turned on to missions are spiritually alive. Until we begin to look beyond ourselves we cannot know the blessing which is available to us.

Third, missions is good for the church because through missions we are obedient to our Lord. An adequate theology of the church must include the centrality of evangelism—of a compassionate ministry to those who live among us as well as those in other cultures and other lands.

**Tell us about Missions Month 1982.**

This November we are planning a brotherhood-wide missions emphasis month. Our Secretary for Church Relations, Rev. Louis Cober, is a pastor of long experience who has a heart for missions. Under his leadership we hope that every pastor and congregation will give special focus to missions this month—in prayer, in promotion, and in giving. Excellent resource materials have been prepared and are now in the hands of congregational leaders. Our goal is for every church to be involved and for contributions for 1982 to go over the top of our budget of \$1,715,642. This is certainly not beyond our reach and, I trust, is not beyond our faith.

**The primary question is, will we be satisfied with the status quo, or do we have faith for new growth in missions?**

**One last question: what satisfactions do you receive from being associated with Brethren in Christ Missions?**

I can easily think of three. First, there is great joy in working together with persons of the spiritual caliber we are privileged to have in our missions program. At the Missions Center in Mount Joy I think of three dedicated women—Verna Mae Ressler, Esther Ebersole and Alice Dourte—who give selflessly to the work. In the Canadian office Carolyn Rotz is similarly dedicated. Then, of course, there are the missionaries themselves. It hardly seems fair to pick out individual names, but where could one find more faithful servants of the Lord than Fannie Longenecker, Mary Olive Lady, Mary Heisey, Pete and Mim Stern, John and Lucille Graybill, or Gordon and Susan Gilmore? And then there are the leaders of emerging national churches like Enrique Palacios, Hem Paul, Bishops William Silungwe and Stephen Ndlovu. Can you imagine working with finer people?

Second, I find fulfillment in being associated with a missions organization which is so carefully managed. The Brethren in Christ have a sound theology and a solid understanding of stewardship. These combine to give our missions thrust a thoroughly biblical basis while maintaining a highly cost-effective program.

Finally, being actively involved in Brethren in Christ Missions helps me to keep my priorities in proper perspective. The pressures of the media, of work and of everyday life tend to divert us from our true purpose. But if we really believe the good news of salvation through Christ Jesus and the spiritual meaning of life here on earth we will be impelled to do kingdom work. Brethren in Christ Missions is, I believe, kingdom work. I can't think of a better way to spend my time.



# Church News



## Reitz Ordination

Rev. John G. Reitz Sr. presented the charge of ordination for his son, John Jr. on Sunday, Sept. 12, in the Skyline View Brethren in Christ Church where the younger Reitz is currently the pastor. Bishop John A. Byers presided at the service with Dr. Owen Alderfer bringing the sermon, "The Equipping of the Ministry."

John and his wife, Roberta, have two daughters. They are both graduates of Messiah College. John received the Master of Divinity Degree from Ashland Theological Seminary in 1979 with a special major in Pastoral Counseling.

## Marsh Creek "Missions Benefit Sale" a success

The day was perfect. Even the bugs which have been such a plague all summer were absent until 4 p.m. when the sale was over.

We announced to our people that they should bring anything they thought would sell and all proceeds would be for Brethren in Christ Missions. The response was wonderful. The option was given to people that if they had items for sale but could not afford to give all the sale price to the Lord, we would just ask the tithe. Some responded to this offer.

One of the featured items was our "missions" quilt, on which was embroidered 219 names at \$2 a name. It was sold by sealed bid because of relatives who did not want to bid against each other. The highest bid was \$435. Another quilt, sewn by one of our ladies and then quilted by other ladies, brought \$340. A crib "Holly Hobbie" quilt sold for \$80, along with 28 knotted quilts and three crib knotted quilts, which sold well.

In total, the net profits from the sale was \$3,090, all of which went to our missions program.

The amount of our missions budget was \$4,100. We had received over \$1,800 of this by offerings prior to the sale. But by having the sale, we went way over the top. And the experience has done much for our church and community in working together to make the project a success.

—Lloyd T. Buckwalter, Pastor, Howard, PA.

## Allegheny Conference

The Air Hill, Antrim, Chambersburg, Montgomery and New Guilford congregations have been meeting to explore the possibility of starting a new church in the vicinity. The St. Thomas-Carlton Heights area is being considered as a possible location. • A Dedication Service was held on Sunday, Sept. 5 by the Montgomery congregation for their recently purchased bus.

The Mowersville congregation reports holding two baptism services this summer. Eight persons were baptized and six became members. • Twenty bags of groceries were dedicated by the South Mountain congregation for the "Hungry in New York City." A cash gift was also given.

## Atlantic Conference

The Men's Fellowship of the Conoy congregation held a Father, Son, and Neighbor Banquet on Friday, Sept. 24. Family members of Chester Bitterman III, martyred Wycliffe translator, were the speakers for the evening. • "Systematic Training for Effective Parenting," is the course being offered to parents of the Harrisburg Church. The course is being taught by Beulah Shaeffer, a member of the congregation.

The Wayne Bignells were installed as the pastoral couple of the new Summit View congregation on Sunday, Sept. 19. The group is presently meeting in the home of Rev. and Mrs. Bignell. • The Souderton congregation reports the annual BCE Kick-off Dinner was held on Monday evening, Sept. 20, with Frank and Diane Fimiano as the guests of honor. The Fimianos, members of the congregation, were given special recognition for their years of service to the congregation.

## Canadian Conference

The Fordwich congregation reports baptizing seven persons this summer. Also, an Open House was held for Elizabeth Byer, in honor of her 100th birthday. It was hosted by her six children. • Special guests of the Rosebank congregation on Sunday evening, Sept. 26, were Carmen and Carolyn Albrecht. They shared about service with MCC in Guatemala.

The youth of the Welland congregation recently held a camping trip. Also, a bi-weekly Bible study has begun for the teens and is being run by the youth co-ordinators, Don and Pauline McCaffery. • A special informal time was held recently by the Westheights congregation on a Sunday evening. The meeting, with an emphasis for children, was held at the home of Ed Cobers.

## Central Conference

Rev. Pete and Miriam Stern were the guests of the Amherst congregation on Wednesday evening, Sept. 5. A former pastor, Rev. Amos Henry, ministered to the church on Sunday morning. • The Christian Union congregation observed its centennial year on Sunday, Oct. 10. A potluck dinner was held following the morning service and an afternoon service was held, featuring history of the church.

Approximately 170 persons attended the film, "Brother Enemy," reports the Sheboygan congregation. • Sippo Valley congregation held its annual Missionary Conference on Sept. 17-19. Fred and Grace Holland were the missionary guests for the weekend.

## Midwest Conference

The Abilene congregation hosted a carry-in dinner on Sunday evening, Sept. 13. The Pete Sterns shared at the service to which the Rosebank and Zion congregations were also invited.

A sacred music concert was presented to the Mountain View congregation on Sunday evening, Sept. 19, by the Gospel Echoes. • Eber and Ruth Dourte are scheduled to be the guest speakers at a Family Life Conference at the Rosebank Church. The dates are Oct. 27, 28, 31.

## Pacific Conference

Bishop Don Shafer was the speaker at the Labish Church on Sunday morning, Oct. 3. He also shared with the youth in an evening service.

The Upland congregation recently held their third annual Christian Education Conference. Guest speaker was Winnie Swalm, Director of Christian Ed.

## For The Record

### Weddings

**Armstrong-Marr:** Sandra, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Glen Marr, Wainfleet, Ont., and Terry, son of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Armstrong, Welland, Ont., Aug. 14, in the Wainfleet Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. B. D. Schwindt and Rev. W. Edward Rickman officiating.

**Barker-Swanger:** Mary Ann, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Swanger, Manheim, Pa., and Ronald L. Barker, son of the late Helen Beattie, Trevoise, Pa., Sept. 18, in the Manheim Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. John L. Bundy officiating.

**Margeson-Williams:** Sheryl, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Williams, Wainfleet, Ont., and Don, son of Mr. and Mrs. Howard Margeson, Ridgeville, Ont., Aug. 28, in the Wainfleet Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. W. Edward Rickman and Rev. Joseph Nowe officiating.

**Murphy-Heisey:** Angela, daughter of Rev. and Mrs. Marion Heisey, New Mexico, and James, son of Rev. and Mrs. Elvin S. Murphy, New York, July 17, in the Souderton Brethren in Christ Church with fathers of the couple officiating.

**Rush-Garis:** Debra, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Garis, Souderton, Pa., and Marc, son of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Rush, Quakertown, Pa., Aug. 21, in the Souderton Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. John Rush officiating.

**Sands-Kelley:** Debra Ann, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Richard H. Kelley, Pottstown, Pa., and J. Michael, son of Mr. and Mrs. William E. Sands, Mountville, Pa., Aug. 28, in the Manor Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Dale W. Engle officiating.



**Schiffbauer-Zook:** Susan Ethel, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Clyde Zook, Abilene, Ks., and Duane Joseph, son of Mrs. Edna Schiffbauer, Sept. 11, in the First Christian Church, Abilene, with Rev. Ray Stites officiating.

**Winger-Oldengarm:** Geraldine, daughter of Herman and Jane Oldengarm, and James, son of Gerald and Ruth Ann Winger, Sept. 18, in the Fordwich Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Kenneth Smith officiating.

## Births

**Abell:** Heidi Alice, Aug. 23; Dennis and Shirley Abell, Manor congregation, Pa.

**Breneman:** Jason Lamar, Aug. 26; Ken and Jean Breneman, Manor congregation, Pa.

**Chirpiano:** Abbey Lynn, Aug. 1; Ron and Jan Chirpiano, Mechanicsburg congregation, Pa.

**Davis:** Daniel Allen, Aug. 18; Kenny and Cathy Davis, Mountain View congregation, Co.

**Delp:** Lyndsay Dyan, Aug. 23; Ken and Leslie Delp, Grantham congregation, Pa.

**Frey:** Amanda May, Sept. 7; Randy and Paula Frey, Manor congregation, Pa.

**Garis:** Duane Michael, July 27; Jay and Diane Garis, Souderton congregation, Pa.

**Heistand:** Shannon Ann, May 26; Donald and Cindy Heistand, Mount Pleasant congregation, Pa.

**Hess:** Joseph Edward David, June 24; Bob and Carmy Hess, Harrisburg congregation, Pa.

**Julian:** David Samuel, Sept. 18; Ron and Lou Ann, Skyline View congregation, Pa.

**Kut:** Timothy James, Sept. 7; Jan and Lynn Kut, Pequea congregation, Pa.

**Martin:** Joshua Aaron, Sept. 2; Larry L. and Bobbi Ann (Leshner) Martin, Five Forks congregation, Pa.

**McCutcheon:** Caleb Thomas, Sept. 15; Tom and Linda McCutcheon, Upland congregation, Ca.

**McNeal:** Elizabeth Catherine, Sept. 7; Bill and Sue McNeal, Palmyra congregation, Pa.

**Mummau:** Jewel Anne, Aug. 22; Lawrence and Sheryl (Rohrer) Mummau, East Waterford, Pa.

**Myers:** Sharon Irene, Aug. 10; Richard and Marian Myers, Manor congregation, Pa.

**Neff:** Christopher Jay, Aug. 23; Jay and Rosalind Neff, Manor congregation, Pa.

**Rodgers:** David Michael, Sept. 18; Robert and Bonita (Chubb) Rodgers, Saville congregation, Pa.

**Shultz:** Terri-Beth, July 2; Jeff and Kathie Shultz, Westheights congregation, Ont.

**Smith:** Dana Marie, Sept. 20; Steve and Phyllis Smith, Elizabethtown congregation, Pa.

**Wallman:** Andrew Paul, Aug. 26; Dan and Linda Wallman, Wainfleet congregation, Ont.

**Weirich:** April Marie, Aug. 26; Craig and Faye Weirich, Manor congregation, Pa.

**Yoder:** Levi Joseph, April 5; Alvin and Sheila Yoder, Marsh Creek congregation, Pa.

**Zimmerman:** Christopher Lynn, July 26; Robert and Sue Zimmerman, Mount Pleasant congregation, Pa.

## Obituaries

**Howe:** William J. Howe, Sr., born Dec. 12, 1900 in Philadelphia, Pa., died July 24, 1982 in Hatfield, Pa. He is survived by his wife, Betty. Also surviving are two daughters: Kathryn E. Smith and Ruth N. Koffel; a son, William Jr.; two step-children: Evelyn B. Ritter and Stanley D. Bartlett; a brother, Joseph; 13 grandchildren; and 8 great-grandchildren. The funeral service was conducted in the Souderton Brethren in Christ Church by Rev. Jay E. Sisco and Paul C. Zeigler. Interment was in the Hatfield Cemetery.

**Keller:** Mrs. Jacqueline J. Keller, Dillsburg, Pa., born June 29, 1935 in Lebanon, Pa., died Sept. 20, 1982 as the result of an explosion in her home. She was the daughter of Charles and Christine (Hilbert) Pyles. Her father survives. On Jan. 18, 1952, she was married to Rev. Robert L. Keller who survives. Also surviving are six sons: Robert L. Jr., Richard L., Ralph L., Randy L., Ronald L., and Ray L.; two daughters: Christine and Judith; seven grandchildren; and nine brothers and sisters. She was a member and pastor's wife of the Dillsburg Brethren in Christ Church and had also served with her husband in the pastorate of the Martinsburg Brethren in Christ Church from 1971-1980. Bishop Alvin Book conducted the funeral service in the Palmyra Brethren in Christ Church. Interment was in the Ebenezer Cemetery, Lebanon County.

### Tribute

The Board of Bishops of the Brethren in Christ

**Mann:** Roy Hess, born Nov. 30, 1898, died Aug. 23, 1982. He was married to Grace Miller who died in 1924 at Macha Mission, Zambia. He is survived by his wife, Esther (Thuma) Mann; a daughter, Ruth (Mrs. Marlin Zook); a son, Robert; and six grandchildren. A veteran missionary to Africa, Roy first went to the mission field in 1922, and was privileged to be present for the 25th, 50th, and 75th anniversary celebrations of Brethren in Christ Missions in Africa. In September of 1981, the Manns left Zimbabwe to reside at Messiah Village, Mechanicsburg, Pa. A memorial service was held at Messiah Village on Aug. 26, with Rev. LeRoy Walters in charge and Rev. George Kibler and Rev. H. Frank Kipe participating. Funeral services were held at the Cross Roads Brethren in Christ Church on Aug. 27, with Rev. LeRoy Walters and Rev. Luke Keefer officiating. Interment was in the adjoining cemetery.

### Tributes

The church salutes a brother in the Lord who stands tall among those he served so faithfully for more than 50 years. Brother Roy Mann will long be remembered in Zambia, Zimbabwe and America for his versatile aptitude and performance in daily living, for his availability to be used where needed, for his consistent Christian living, for his devotion to Christ and His service, and for his cheerfulness and confidence in his final illness. A quote about Brother Roy in *There is No Difference* characterized him as "ready to go where needed, adaptable, persevering, and he exemplified the sacrifice bound to the altar."

His farewell words to the Zimbabwean Church just before he came home were II Timothy 4:7, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." In a recent contact he mentioned the emphasis and deep concern of his message was that the "faith be kept." Ours, whether African or American, is to keep the faith purposefully until He comes.

Board of Bishops

Church wish to support and rejoice with you, Pastor Keller and family, at this time of celebration and bereavement. With our limited human understanding, we enter with you into your sorrow and loss.

Please be assured of our prayers and those of the church at large, that you feel the undergirding of the God of all comfort, not only today but in the days, weeks and months ahead.

Do take comfort in these words of Scripture: "And there shall be no night there: and they need no candle, neither light of the sun: for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign forever and ever."

Bishop Alvin J. Book  
for the Board of Bishops

**Pye:** Vernon M. Pye, born April 19, 1892, died Sept. 5, 1982. He is survived by his wife, Mattie Sider Pye. Also surviving are a son, Rev. Arthur; a daughter, Ruth Lehman; six grandchildren; five great grandchildren; and a foster daughter, Ethel Jonas. He was preceded in death by two brothers and a sister. He was a member of the Wainfleet Brethren in Christ Church where the funeral service was conducted by Rev. W. Edward Rickman. Interment was in the Maple Lawn Cemetery.

**Winger:** Ralph H., born Nov. 14, 1904, died Sept. 12, 1982. He is survived by his wife, Stella; a son, Robert; two sisters: Pearl and Clara; and two brothers: Stanley and Harvey. The funeral service was conducted in the Mechanicsburg Brethren in Christ Church by Rev. Charles R. Burgard and Rev. Randy Hall.

Roy Mann served Christ in Brethren in Christ Missions ministries for 59 years. He went to Africa in 1922 with his first wife, Grace, who died of malarial complications in 1924. He then served as a single missionary, sometimes in lonely situations, until in 1936 he married Esther Thuma.

Roy served in many and varying roles in what was then Northern and Southern Rhodesia, now Zambia and Zimbabwe. At various times he served on each of the five main mission stations and in several of the districts. He served the church as a builder, district superintendent, mission station superintendent, helper and friend. At one point he also served as Acting General Superintendent when the General Superintendent was on furlough.

In 1955 Roy and Esther returned to the States and for ten years gave themselves to various ministries: at Messiah Home, as a rural pastor, and in Voluntary Service in the Bronx, N.Y. In 1965 they again returned to Africa, the land he loved so well, where they continued to serve, first as missionaries and then as self-supporting missionary associates both in Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Brother Mann has been an outstanding missionary who was loved and respected by missionary and national co-workers alike. He was never one to complain and was always found at his post of duty. He was cheerfully optimistic and always grateful for opportunities to help others. One of his favorite expressions was "God is faithful."

We share with the family in the pain of his parting and in rejoicing at his promotion to the mansions above. We express our sympathy and love to Esther as she walks life's pathway alone. To Robert and his family here in the States and to Ruth and her family in Japan we offer our sympathy in the loss of a loving father and grandfather. May the memory of his faithful life and the grace of the Lord Jesus sustain you.

Donald R. Zook  
Brethren in Christ Missions



## An interview on Christian education

# LOOKING

by Mary Ebersole



John Arthur Brubaker sits across the table, gently chewing the earpiece of his glasses as his eyes look expectantly for my first question. A few brow and cheek creases betray that he is a seasoned pastor and Christian educator, not a newcomer to those roles. Since 1958, John Arthur has served as pastor to three Brethren in Christ congregations, and as administrator on regional and denominational Boards of Christian Education.

He tells first of his varied associations with Christian education for more than two decades. John Arthur first pastored Shens Church (near Elizabethtown, Pa.) a union Sunday school and church in which three denominations shared a large, thriving Sunday school, a building, and leaders. Skyline View (Harrisburg, Pa.), John Arthur's next pastorate, began as a church planting venture. The core of the Christian education program grew from twelve people divided into three classes—children, youth and adults.

While pastoring, John Arthur Brubaker agreed to increasing involvements with first the regional, then denominational Boards of Christian Education from 1961 to 1968. Board work moved him to Nappanee in 1970, and in 1972, he took the position of Executive Director. In this capacity, he visited many Brethren in Christ congregations for CAP evaluation (Congregational Analysis Program) and spent part of his time

editing Grades 7 and 8 of the Foundation Series Sunday school curriculum. Presently, John Arthur pastors the Ref-ton, Pa., Brethren in Christ congregation, which has an appointed director of Christian education.

Over the years, John Arthur has seen several changes in the denomination's concept of Christian education and in his own views of it. "The fifties," he reports, "saw the Sunday school boom. Sunday school attendance usually exceeded worship; contests and campaigns brought in new people. The words *Christian education* were almost synonymous with Sunday school." He regrets that "we have lost some of that vision; congregations are not catching the excitement about what can happen through Christian education."

Maturity and experience have changed John Arthur's own ideas about Christian education. "I came into the pastorate fairly convinced that Christian education was a vital form of congregational life. As I then moved into my relationship with the board and in my ministry, I became increasingly convinced of that. I also developed a growing perception of the scope of Christian education—it's not just Sunday school." Work on the Foundation Series had a tremendous impact on Brubaker's views on Christian education. "I became overwhelmed with the power of Christian education," he recalls. "I realized how complex and

subtle it is. You can't guarantee what the outcome will be. Today," he adds, "I'm less convinced about the importance of specific things that happen on a given Sunday morning with a given lesson. I believe relationships, and even small classes, are some of the most effective forms of Christian education."

What, then, should be the goals of Christian education? What does Christian education look like? Where does it happen? Brubaker is convinced that the life of the congregation is the center for Christian education. A congregation needs to "provide a range of experiences in which a wide variety of people can grow in their faith." One can almost see the idea expand in his head as John Arthur sits up sharply, hands forming an imaginary circle. "The congregation itself may be perceived as a teaching/learning community. We meet in fellowship with one another; we teach one another and we learn from one another. Christian education is not merely the classroom experience or the four walls. It's the totality of congregational life and its impact on children. The congregation teaches by what it values, how it decides, how it fellowships.

"Christian education, then, becomes

**Christian education  
is the totality  
of congregational  
life . . .**



**I really think, as I come back into the pastorate, that a lot of the effective things that happen in congregational life happen "one on one."**

# BOTH WAYS

the total of experiences with which we impact a life. I'm more convinced than ever of their shaping value. The varied experiences of Christian education guide people *toward* faith, *into* faith and *in* their faith."

If Christian education is the teaching and learning that flow with the life of the congregation, do methods really matter? John Arthur sees several influences on the effectiveness of Christian education. "Equipping of teachers and leaders is the key," Brubaker states. "One of the essential ministries of the Board of Christian Education and of leaders in the congregation is to train persons in the congregation to do Christian education. The people who teach Sunday after Sunday, who lead youth week after week, and who share life experiences with families—equip them."

Brubaker observes two pitfalls in this process. "People who accept a position with high commitment and spiritual vitality tend to wear out in a short time unless they receive training. Training enriches and expands their ideas and enthusiasm." Another danger is an unspoken agreement between the staff recruiter and not-so-willing volunteer: "I will teach as long as you don't make any demands of me. I will teach what I have to offer with minimal preparation. I don't want to bother with training."

Brubaker sees the pastor as important in encouraging ongoing training. The pastor may recommend books, tapes, audio-visuals, seminars or workshops to enrich the congregation's Christian education workers. With even greater effect, he may affirm the person's gift, and encourage him or her to develop and enrich that gift: "I see you as having real

teaching ability. I believe you'd benefit from this seminar. Let's go together."

Any setting that fosters relationships enhances Christian education, explains Brubaker. "I really think as I come back into the pastorate, that a lot of the most effective things that happen in congregational life happen one on one. We often underestimate the value of small classes. When one or two pupils show up, we react, 'I cannot teach the lesson.' We quickly shunt them to another class. It's the worst decision we can make. First, we assume that we teach *lessons*, not *people*. Second, what better way could be found to relate to one or two people than during that Sunday school class? We have a chance to talk about life as those two people experience it."

Brubaker perceives parents as important parts of the teaching staff in the congregation's Christian education programs. "In the family, a pet dies, relatives pass through experiences, tough things happen. All are kinds of experiences that need to be interpreted." John Arthur recalls from his boyhood how his mother sat on the floor in his room and retold Bible stories with his building blocks. "She was," he affirms,

"using life experiences to interpret biblical faith." Brubaker believes that "unless what happens in the congregation is reinforced by what happens in the home, the effectiveness of Christian education is greatly minimized."

Statistics, numbers, attendance figures—don't they indicate a congregation's effectiveness in Christian education? "Maybe," comes the cautious reply. John Arthur admits, "Those of us who work in the church are as vulnerable as anyone else. We like to see products, statistics, tangible things. I faithfully fill out my statistics reports. I feel pleased when the numbers go up, concerned when they go down. However, the ultimate question is not how many were here? but what happened to those who were? I don't say that the one question rules out the other; I'm afraid too often we don't ask the second question."

Reflecting a bit, Brubaker adds, "Two things are not indicated by numbers and are outside the Christian educator's control. Every child or adult has the freedom to choose, which makes the outcome unpredictable. And, whatever we do in Christian education cannot duplicate the work of the Holy Spirit. Christian education," he concludes, "is a process. It is the dialogue of people as they together explore faith and its meaning in Sunday school class, around a camp fire, in a camp cabin, wherever. You can hardly match those kinds of experiences for teaching and learning."

**It is essential to train persons in the congregation to do Christian education.**

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*Mary Ebersole is the revision writer for Grades 7 and 8 of the Foundation Series Sunday school curriculum. She and her husband and daughter live in Akron, PA and attend the Speedwell Heights congregation.*



# Readers Respond

To be considered for publication  
letters must be signed  
and should be 300 words or less

## A gift idea

We have received the *Evangelical Visitor* ever since we became members of the Brethren in Christ Church, and we are senior citizens. The *Visitor* is welcome at our house and never lays in the mailbox very long, or gets dusty.

Years ago I thought every mature person in the Brethren in Christ Church received the *Visitor*. However, as the years rolled on I discovered my thinking was wrong. Recently while in the process of teaching a Sunday school class, I had occasion to refer to an article in the *Visitor*. I asked for hands to see how many might have read it. Out of a class of approximately thirteen or fourteen, composed of senior members and middle-aged people, to my surprise there were only a few hands up.

After this discovery I would suggest that anyone receiving the *Visitor*, if financially able, would subscribe for one or more gift subscriptions for 1983.

Our church paper keeps us informed about people and the work of the

church; we are like one big family. I have been giving a good many gift subscriptions for a good many years. It is not only a blessing to the people that receive the paper, but it solves some of your own problems, especially around Christmas time. Let us do something special and call 1983 gift year. May the Lord help us in this.

Howard F. Landis, Sr.  
Telford, Pa.

## After the end

At first I was attracted by the article in the August 10 *Visitor* called "After Human Life Seems to End" because it was written from a little broader viewpoint than what we usually expect in our church paper. Then as I read on I began to feel as if it was a broader viewpoint then I could agree with—almost as if it were written for non-evangelicals. Finally I came up short when I read that "Bantu cultures seem to have much to teach

missionaries from the West about the presence here-and-now of the ancestral spirits of loved ones gone before."

As we continue to study and work in missions we find ourselves desiring more and more to affirm cultures different from our own, and encourage new Christians to preserve all they can from their traditions and cultural wisdom. The question has come up from time to time as to the presence of the spirits of the dead. Some Bantu people *have* contended for the presence of these spirits here and now, but our observation has been that (at least with *our* friends) the idea is accompanied with fear, and not joy. One has to be very careful to remember well and not offend such ancestors. If handled properly, they can be called upon to act as intercessors, since God is so far above and away that He cannot be approached by mortals. Such a concept is certainly contrary to Scriptures like 1 Tim. 2:5.

Hebrews 12 does refer to a "great cloud of witnesses," but this does not

## DIALOGUE DIALOGUE DIALOGUE DIALOGUE DIALOGUE

### Poverty thinking?

I am writing this article in response to the articles appearing in the September *Visitor* regarding simple living versus abundant living.

Let me preface everything I say by stating first and foremost that Jesus Christ and my relationship with Him is the most important priority in my life. And I seek daily to draw closer to Him in my devotion and service. I thank God also for the heritage of being brought up by God-fearing parents in the Brethren in Christ Church. However, I write this article to draw attention to a seldom talked of perspective in most evangelical circles regarding the area of economics.

My challenge is to those who seem to imply that it is wrong or sinful for Christians to want to make money. And forgive me if I'm wrong, but the recent articles appearing in the *Visitor* (which certainly are very consistent with most other evangelical publications regarding this subject) seem to suggest very strongly this underlying supposition.

Let me just say this, if Jesus is Lord (and I'm sure I join most people reading

this article in affirming that He is), He is also Lord of economics. It is God who has given us the ability to make wealth (Deut. 8:18). And if we seek to honor and glorify our Lord by following and *exercising* the principles He has established in His word, we must expect success! (Josh. 1:8). And I submit to you that for some who have the courage to dream big dreams (Prov. 29:18), the result will be financial prosperity in addition to the spiritual prosperity resulting from obedience to God's word.

Let me expand a little more about dreams. Everyone, at one time or another, has dreamed dreams, some of which have been big dreams. My experience has been, however, that for most people, the older a person becomes, the smaller his dreams become. The reason is that most people fit their dreams to their means. I call that poverty thinking because that requires little faith.

I believe that the size of our dreams determines the effectiveness and scope of our witness for Jesus. For it is Jesus who has given us the ability to dream—but praise God, He didn't stop there.

Because with that ability to dream, He has also given us the ability to create a means of accomplishing those dreams. That, however, requires faith (evidence of things not seen). And unfortunately, too few evangelical Christians today are willing to answer the call for leadership from a crying world for men and women who are willing to live by faith. The faith that will accomplish big dreams.

My challenge then is not just for us to use our God-given ability to dream big dreams. But, more importantly, to use that same ability to create the means of achieving those dreams, by faith, instead of spending so much time and energy trying to figure out how to live more with less.

We all know that the need for money to finance the spread of the Gospel is great and growing larger each year. Please don't be guilty of stealing the dreams of those Christians who aspire to financial prosperity by following God's word. For those are the people who will be able to make a difference.

Ron Long  
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*Evangelical Visitor*



prove that they are near us or involved with our lives. Luke 16 talks about the "great gulf fixed" between the places where the evil and righteous dead are, and says that no one can cross this gulf. This does not prove that the dead cannot come back to the *earth*, but when the rich man asked that Lazarus return to preach to his brothers, Abraham refused to let him go. From these Scriptures it would seem that the dead may be able to *see* what is going on here, but does not indicate that they are here.

Furthermore the Bible has much to say about not trying to communicate with the dead. Deuteronomy 18:10-12 indicates that such activity nauseates God. If it is so good to be taught about the presence of "the ancestral spirits of loved ones gone before" why doesn't the Scripture say more about it and why is so much said about not trying to communicate with them?

As evangelicals we believe that since the ancestors of the Bantu peoples referred to had not received the gospel, they were not Christians and therefore they could not be "the church triumphant actively present while the church militant worships."

For these reasons I take exception to the ideas presented in the above mentioned article.

Grace Holland  
Bulawayo, Zimbabwe

## Messiah College News

Dr. Bruce Lockerbie, Dean of Faculty at The Stony Brook School on Long Island, was the speaker during Christian Life Emphasis Week at Messiah College last month. He was also the Staley Distinguished Christian Scholar lecturer.

An outstanding layman and spokesman for the Christian faith, Lockerbie spoke in College Chapel, residence hall meetings, classes, and faculty meetings on the theme, "Contemporary Culture in Christian Perspective."

Lockerbie has lectured in many countries of the world and has written, co-authored, or edited 30 books. He has written more than 500 essays, articles, and reviews, and has appeared on many radio and television programs.

### Editorial

## A golden opportunity

Two denominational committees begin their work in the coming months. Perhaps their function in the past has been largely "behind the scenes." But in an extraordinary way, their work this year will profoundly affect the brotherhood and its ministries for the next decade and beyond. I refer to the general Nominating Committee and the Bishops Nominating Committee.

Formed anew every six years, the Bishops Nominating Committee will bring to the 1984 General Conference their recommendations for regional conference bishops who will serve into 1990. As a result of the restructure plan approved at the 1982 General Conference, the number of bishops increases to six (the Midwest and Pacific conferences each having their own, rather than sharing a bishop as is now the case).

Normally the general Nominating Committee (which is the Board of Administration plus the personnel secretary) handles only the expiring terms of board and committee members. However, the restructure plan calls for current boards and several committees to go out of existence in 1984. Six new program boards will be created, several with substantially redefined responsibilities. Moreover, so that these new boards can begin functioning immediately after Conference, the Board of Administration has special authorization to appoint the boards 12 months prior to the 1984 Conference. By the time Conference confirms them, the boards will have already met, decided on program and administrators, and projected budgets for coming years.

In a later *Visitor*, details will be given on how you can suggest persons for these major assignments. The Board of Administration is to be commended for taking steps to open up these processes to the brotherhood.

One hopes, however, that neither committee is tempted to begin immediately with specific names. The restructuring process, with its deliberate decision to terminate current boards and create new ones, provides a golden opportunity to reflect on the nature and function of leadership within the church.

It would be ideal if we could review our basic understanding of leadership. Such review, while most certainly needed, is highly unlikely, given the schedule outlined above. However, certain fundamental questions must be addressed if the new boards are to have integrity and are to serve the church adequately. I note only a few.

For example, with all boards having at least part-time staff, what is the nature and function of a board which supervises administrators? How much technical expertise is needed at the board level? How much can or ought to be secured at the staff level, or through consultants?

Given the fact that the new boards will be small, can geographic representation be kept from playing too prominent a role in selecting board members? Should persons be chosen primarily because of strong interest in one field (thus being enthusiastic promoters of that board)? To what extent must board members grasp the total ministry of the brotherhood (making possible a sense of perspective of how one ministry meshes with the whole)?

Assessing the spiritual gifts, experience and potential of persons being considered as board members and bishops is a crucial task. And I believe the Brethren in Christ have room to improve in this area of gift discernment. But this is not the first step, particularly not in this biennium, in which we have consciously decided to break with past structures.

The hour calls for first carefully thinking through the nature and purpose—the overarching "vision"—of these new boards as well as the role of the bishops in our brotherhood. Only then can the committees begin to adequately match the gifts of specific persons to the needs for leadership.

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## THE CONTEMPORARY SCENE

### Carter Calls for Increased Attention to Human Rights

In Atlanta, former President Jimmy Carter recently called on government and private sector groups—including churches—to condemn violations of human rights wherever people are oppressed in the world. Carter spoke to 1,500 Emory University students and faculty at this first in a series of lectures on human rights. Carter's 35-minute lecture, "Human Rights: Dilemmas and Directions," inaugurated Emory's year-long symposium on human rights and installed Carter in his new role as distinguished professor at Emory.

Carter stressed the United States' responsibility for furthering human rights throughout the world. Most countries either lacked

internal strength or a world voice permitting strong statements denouncing human rights violations, he said. Oppressed people, Carter claimed, have no "champion" of human rights among nations that remain timid and fearful of the issues of human rights.

"There is only one country which has the strength, the moral commitment, the influence and the economic independence to be the chief spokesman for these suffering people: the United States of America," Carter asserted. "When we fail or refuse to speak there is a deafening silence."

Carter criticized Reagan administration policies for "abandoning" human rights policies created during previous administrations, though he cited the Reagan peace proposal

for the Middle East as a step toward "the affirmation of the Camp David accords." Carter charged the Reagan administration with a "confused" and "at times downright embarrassing" human rights policy, lacking in clarity and consistency. He also called policies which seek to achieve national goals through "the exertion of pressure" as "short-sighted and counter-productive."

Carter, a Southern Baptist layman, cited his religious experiences as influential in molding his philosophy of human rights. "The teachings of Christ and the standards of the Judeo-Christian ethic are certainly compatible" with the concept of human rights, Carter said. "Love goes hand-in-hand with human rights," he added.

He also said both Israelis and Palestinians have suffered in heightened mid-east conflicts. Though Carter acknowledged Israel's endurance of "abominable violations of human rights," he also said Israel "must understand that we endorse the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people." His statement was interrupted by applause.

### OCTOBER IS VISITOR MONTH

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### NAE Holds Anti-abortion Stand; Reagan Shows Some Commitment

Following a September 14 meeting with White House Chief of Staff James A. Baker III, Robert Dugan, Director of the Office of Public Affairs of the National Association of Evangelicals, said that "evangelicals will continue to oppose abortion-on-demand even if current legislation to restrict it is not enacted in the 97th Congress." He continued, "because the welfare of humankind depends on the value a society sets on human life, we have to be in this for the long haul. We do not expect a quick fix on this or any of the major complex political, moral and economic questions troubling our society."

Highlighting the meeting called to discuss pro-life strategy was the unexpected visit of President Reagan. Walking into Baker's office unannounced, President Reagan "apologized" for interrupting a working meeting to indicate he had been writing letters and making phone calls on behalf of the forthcoming cloture votes and the pro-life measures sponsored by Sen. Jesse Helms (R-NC) and Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-UT). He also shared experiences when as Governor of California he began to formulate his position on abortion. Dugan commented that "the President's involvement could not have been more gratifying."